The True Christmas Spirit Which Came in the Midst of Loneliness in the New Home

Transplanting Mother

BY MARTHA KING DAVIS

"It doesn't make any difference a price! about wanting, Roland. Your father

have grandma here to live." Small over everything and I showed her pillow. "You don't mean-you can't Gwendolyn nodded her curly head all around. I wish now I hadn't." with much satisfaction. "Yes, sissy! Grandma's always

pattin' you on the back. If you stick pin in your finger she thinks you're

"She don't, either! Grandma's awful nice! I'd be 'shamed to treat her

as you do, smartie Roland."
"If mother comes here to live," an nounced Mr. Renshaw sonorously, proper respect. And I won't have all this thing over, and Clarence will this wrangling at the table-underher. The Carleys will buy the place, your house any time you say. furniture and all, just as it stands." Mrs. Renshaw folded her napkin

and rose hurriedly. "I'll do that very thing. Run along, children, it's time Clarence Renshaw hesitated

Be kind of easy with mother, Be-

"Leave it to me, Clarence! I should hope mother had some sense."

IT was one of those clear, exhilarating mornings in late October.

Abby Renshaw, her old gray sweater in her garden gathering a last bou- do you think of that?" quet of fragrant hardy chrysanthe The old lady sighed a bit as she sniffed the curly blossoms. "Bobby's favorite flowers! I never pick hard, too hard!"

Always had this sorrow cast its shadow over Abby Renshaw's heart, to the garage. The other stared Her younger son, in direct contrast to his pragmatical brother Clarence. had played such daring pranks and might be drawn aside, if only for a been the victim of so many reckless escapades that his stern father but often the lonely ache in her heart had finally lost all patience with the was a bit hard to bear. boy and driven him from home, with wanted to see or hear of him again. Renshaw died Abby cherished a long-

frail, so that Beatrice, parking her car at the gate, thought, "Well, it's time we did something. I don't be-

lieve she'll live through the winter.' Abby came forward with a glad smile of welcome. Rare indeed were visits from her fashionable daughterin-law. "Beatrice! You have come to dinner with me. I said to myself this morning when I dropped the dishcloth. 'There, somebody's and made a johnny-cake and an apple pie. Come in and take off your

ing to live with us!"

Abby dropped the glove she was about to lay upon the table. Stooping to recover it, she lifted a fac a bit flushed with exertion. "Why. Beatrice, I 'spose you mean visit. I had been thinking I might go and stay with you a day or two."

"No, mother, not a day or two, but always. You simply can't stay on here alone another winter. Clarence to be fascinatingly entertaining. worries about you all the time. And now we have the new house there's no reason at all why you shouldn't

Beatrice, just as kind as it can be," exclaimed Abby appreciately, "but, my child, I couldn't do it. I've go my chickens to look after, and I good time you will have!"
must keep a fire in the house or the "Mother don't know what she is water would freeze, and my flowers. all right. When I don't feel just mind being put in the attic room. It's right I tell the milk boy, and Phoebe nice, but kind of cold." Shorter is always glad to come and stay with me."

place. It's been five years since he "She said I might sound you." place. It's been five years since he

Finance was a blank page to Abby Renshaw. Clarence had taken entire charge at his father's death. He had told her there was money enough for her to stay on at the old place. He had paid the bills; she had never

questioned or given it thought. ingly. "Anyh "You mean that there's no more a few days."

there's no money?"

Beatrice nodded. "But you will have more money. Mother, for Clarence has had the most wonderful opportunity to sell the place. It's so old he never dreamed any one would ever buy it; but these people not only want the house, but the furniture and the place of the oil stove it was rather cold, and Abby developed a slight cough, and one morning after a restless, sleepless night felt too miserable to go down two flights of stairs to the dining room. everything!"

Abby rose stiffy. "I-I think I out the reason. left the drafts open on the kitchen stove. Wait a minute—I'll go and it a case of grip, wrote a prescription and said he would call again the

I zer alone, Beatrice looked about the room. It was a homey kind of room, with the low windows, the straight-backed chairs, the old-fash-loned mahogany table, the rag rugs, the couch with its quilted blue coverlet. She remembered that Clarence had said that the Carleys were to use the place for a summer home, that Mrs. Carley was enthusiastic over the quaint old furniture. Beatrice shrugged her shoulders. She hated old furniture with the day of the sitting room and it had always been warm. She had never before had an attack of grip. ged her shoulders. She hated old fur- had an attack of grip.

When Abby returned, Beatrice slipped out.
glanced at her and breathed a little * * * * sigh of relief. There wasn't going ABBY'S thoughts were very busy to be a scene after all. to be a scene after all. .

RS. CLARENCE WALLING- lady said quietly. And when her spent a Christmas away from the FORD RENSHAW put down her coffee cup with a plaintive the Carleys would not take posses- After a time she became conscious The correction with a sign of resignation, sion until the following spring a bit of heavy steps on the stairs, the "Well, I should think Mother Renshaw of a smile came into her face, "Oh, sound of voices outside the door. would be glad and thankful that she so I can stay here till then!" Which necessitated Beatrice's explaining that

For the love of Mike, mother, have Clarence didn't dare put the sale of heart! Who wants Gram here to a day, for fear the Carleys would back down, and they had offered such The corners of Abby's mouth tight-

and I have decided it is the best ened. "I think I remember her. She stopped last summer for a drink of "I think it would be just fine to water. I asked her in. She exclaimed

Beatrice's eyes widened. "Wish you hadn't! It was the luckiest day of your life. They will make over the place beautifully! In a few years you will be proud to say you ever owned

She rose, and commenced pulling on her coat. It seemed a propitious moment to leave. "I wish I could stay longer, Mother, but I've simply loads you children will treat her with of things to do today. You just think

be out the first of the week." "It doesn't need any thinking over, stand? Beatrice, you might go and "It doesn't need any thinking over. see mother this morning and—tell Beatrice. I will be ready to go to

Driving out of the yard, Mrs. Clar-"Thank goodness, that's over!"

Abby went slowly into her spotless kitchen. The old clock on the mantel chimed 12. Mechanically she placmoment, fussing with his watch fob. ed a solitary plate and cup and saucer on the table. She brough etrice. Remember, she's mighty fond from the pantry a golden-brown johnny-cake, an apple pie with flaky crust. Then she sat down and, leaning forward, buried her face in her arms

The next day Phoebe Shorter confided to a passing neighbor, "I guess Abby Renshaw's clean gone crazy! Abby Renshaw, her old gray sweater buttoned tightly about her, was out and a whole apple pie! Now, what

* * * * ABBY Renshaw had been in her son's home two weeks. To all em without I think of him. His appearance she had contentedly fitted hair was almost as bright as gold. Into her niche, that niche being a Poor little Bobby-his father was too comfortable room at the back of the house. From one window was a view of a well-kept driveway leading down blankly at the closely curtained windows of the house next door. Abby wished that some time those curtains moment. Not that Abby was curious.

That first week she had made some the final admonition that he never dreadful mistakes. After breakfast she had put on a clean gingham apron And they never had! When Father and gone out into the kitchen to help ing hope that then her boy would loaf of gingerbread. But the girl who come home, but the years slipped had waited on the table was wiping dishes, and another woman whom she Thought of him brought lines of pain to her face. She looked old, pie crust. Beatrice had appeared like whatever are you doing out

> Then, as they safely gained the living-room, "Bridget is such an old fuss! I hardly dare offer a suggestion. But she is a dream of a cook

"Well, I don't believe you could," at all and he wouldn't let you, and making plenty. Did sighed her daughter-in-law regret- Clarence was such a prig and tattle- the old homestead?"

grandmother's room.

"Tell me what you did when you were a little girl, grandma." The stories thus evoked were sure

It was Gwendolyn who brough news of expected guests. week'll be Thanksgiving, and Uncle Fred and Aunt Clara and Rosamond and Hazel and Junior are coming,

she announced gleefully. Aunt Clara was Beatrice's sister. "That's fine," she said. "What

going to do with you. She wants to Clarence needn't worry about me, I'm use this room. She wonders if you'd

Abby gazed down the gravel driveway for a moment. Then she turn-Beatrice straightened: "Mother, you ed with a smile: "Why, of course ! must know that Father Renshaw wouldn't mind. Did your mother tell

Abby's eyes twinkled. "Well, run away and tell her that I sounded-all right."

So Abby was moved up another flight of stairs. "It's a shame to ask you to do

it, mother," declared Beatrice con ingly. "Anyhow, it will only be for that I can't stay here because stayed on, and Abby Renshaw also But after Thanksgiving Aunt Clara

Beatrice sent Gwendolyn up to find

Then a doctor came, pronounced next day.

Beatsice, thinking that she slept

"Tell-me_more about it," the old year, almost Christmas. She had not

Clarence came in. "Well, mother, how are you feeling? Fine enough

Her eyes brightened: "Phoebe?" He shook his head. "No, some one ou've not seen in a long, long time." "Why, how strange," she mur-"Some one I've not seen in a long, long time." started and raised her head from the



SUDDENLY SHE STARTED AND RAISED HER HEAD. "YOU DON'T MEAN— YOU CAN'T MEAN—."
A MAN CAME ACROSS THE ROOM. "MOTHER!" HE CRIED.

ing of thirty years.

The next thing Abby heard was was Bobby Renshaw. He told me Beatrice's voice and it sounded miles about father's death and how you away. "Of all the stupidity! Clar-had come in to the city to live with little conversation with his brothwould have known better."

was so poorly. Clarence said she was | wait a minute!" just used up with a cold."

coming around all right." "Get out of sight, Bob," cried the next floor?" Beatrice, sharply. "When she sees you she will go off again.'

and told her he was here."

him right here." she whispered. And three little children, and they like to when her hand was caught and held play in the halls." tightly in both of his she gave a little sigh of perfect peace and hap-

At last they were left alone. Why have you stayed away all these ered slightly. "Clarence sold it. Bob-

ever go into the kitchen—you would upset the whole system."

"I don't know why, mother." His word and things."

Beatrice slipped off her veavy coat and sank down in the red-cushioned and sank down in the red-cushioned and sank mother. I rocker. "No, not my hat, mother. I almost forgot. Then came things."

The seemed best, Bobby. But, my dear, you haven't told me a thing about—Mary?"

Type, indeed, old people are a propositive live, indeed, old people are a propositiv fully. "You see, I put everything in tale. Those first years-well, some to maintain a discreet silence. The that I almost forgot. Then came family usually talked of things she Mary and we were married, and she longed for, except, perhaps, you! I much about Mary.

closed up. I saw Abe Parker. He well now, son; the sight of your dear nearly fell over when I told him I face * * * *

faintly familiar, "I didn't realize she and we came right up. I couldn't from his cigar. He looked around the room, at the it was, too." Clarence, defensively: "I came in lighted oil stove. "Say, why in the

oil stoves. Haven't they a room on "It's a nice room, Bobby," said ou she will go off again."

Abby hastily, "and quiet. You see, Clarence sald sharply.

Abby's eyes flew open. "No, I want Beatrice's sister is here with her "Yes," interrupted Beatrice.

> "Did you want to come here to live?" asked Bob with his old-time abruptness. "Abe said the place was sold. How did you happen to sell?"
> The thin-veined hand in his quiv-

at all and he wouldn't let you, and making plenty. Did you want to sell

I couldn't stay on there.

And from the look that came into strenuous day."

A man came across the room. everything's all right with mother.' could get her hands on you. My!
"Mother!" he cried, and his voice So I came and I went out to the old You'd be well in a jiffy!"
wibrated with all the love and long-place and, of course, found it all Abby smiled happily. "I'm 'most

I should have thought you Clarence and Beatrice. Believe me! er and sister-in-law. "You say the rould have known better."

I wasn't long in getting here. I Jameson Carleys bought it?"

Then a strange voice, yet somehow walked in on Clarence at his office Clarence carefully flicked the ashes

ley bought it, and a mighty good deal Clarence, defensively: "I came in lighted oil stove. "Say, why in the deuce are you up here in the top galmonth around all right."

Again the strange voice, "She's lery? I always hated those smelly oil stoves. Haven't they a room on there? Fifty years! Like uprooting The an oak."

"She couldn't have stayed on there," "Oh, a question of-money?"

Clarence nodded. "Father didn't leave anything. This selling of the place gives mother enough to live comfortably all the rest of her days "Oh, of course," agreed Bob.

felt it a fine thing of Beatrice to be willing to have mother come here to

Renshaw leaned back in a cor-

She waved frantically.

the world?" She craned forward. "There's the house, and, why—there's

Bob sprang out and opened the door. Abby drew back. "I don't believe I want to stop, Bobby. You see, we

don't own it any more." the neighbors round about.

"Merry Christmas!" "Welcome home, Abby!" "Glad to see ye back, Abby Renshaw!" "Should 'twas time you came home!"

coal fire glowing redly; and from the kitchen came the delicious odor of cooking turkey.

They placed Abby in the old red rocker Bob came forward with a Mary, mother."

The tall woman stooped and took Abby's face between white, strong, canable hands. "Dear Mother Ren-

"There's something in your lap. mother," Bob said, gently.

A folded white paper. With trem-

ryn Carley to Abby Renshaw."

Abby raised tear-wet eyes. "I don't understand," she whispered brokenly.

Mary caught her trembling hand. title or a saucepan, break up mistoe, so I said ivy. You know, what hot tile or a saucepan, break up mistoe, so I said ivy. You know, what hot tile or a saucepan, break up mistile cupon it, and make it burn, stink and sizzle for the luck bag! "But, my gosh:" said Caesar, "where's the point with ivy?" ryn Carley to Abby Renshaw.

about it when she understood. Then knew nothing whatever about, or the made up to me all I'd lost and her son's face Abby instantly knew In the hall Clarence spoke apolo- he sent for me and I'm going to stay children wrangled and the entire dinner hour was devoted to discipline.

Roland ignored her with the blase said to Mary, Tm going east. I don't much about Mary.

I much about Mary.

much about Mary.

"You see, mother, I got typhoid, and man."

with you till you're well and strong and Phoebe is going to live with you.

Mary was the nurse who pulled me "Oh, that's all right. By the way, Hear how happy she is! Then next nonchalance of sixteen. But Gwendo- care much about seeing father or through; and she's been pulling me I'm going to phone the doctor to summer Bob and I will come for sevlyn often found her way to her Clarence, but I must find out if through ever since. I just wish she send up a nurse. Good-night."

steps. "Guess that'll hold 'em." his lips curled scornfully as he lighted his cigar.

He sighed and looked up at the starlit sky. "Oh, Mary, Mary, we've got some work to do, believe me!" Came a wonderfully bright and

glorious Christmas morning. Abby Renshaw had left the attic coom and was comfortably settled in a big leather chair in the library. The old lady's face beamed with hap piness. She had just finished open-ing her Christmas gifts.

"You shouldn't have done it," look ing up at Bob in loving reproach, as she fingered caressingly the beautiful

fur coat in her lap.

Beatrice glanced down a bit en-"I'll have to borrow it, mother, when I go to the opera. It makes mine look positively shabby." She went over to Clarence. He was

frowning angrily: "You ought to have given mother something better than that gray kimono. Beside Bob's gift it looks cheaper than dirt."

Beatrice tossed her head. "I guese he can afford to give her a fur coat He hasn't given her anything in thirty years." Bob bent over his mother's chair.

You are going to christen that coat today. I have a car coming at 11 o'clock to take you for a little ride.' "THIS is a real pleasure." Abby

ner of the limousine and beamed at place. Good land! If there ain't Abe

The old man took off his cap and of the local young folks as to the stuff they cut, as a matter of buusi-"Bobby, how did you know I'd rather ride out here than any place in

moke coming out of the chimney! know those people were going to The car stopped at the gate, and

Then the door of the house flew open and out ran Phoebe Shorter, Jennie Holcomb, Fanny Reed and all

They almost carried the bewildered old lady up the walk and into the

tall woman, a stranger. "This is years?

bling fingers Abby opened it: "Kath-

'My goodness! I'll bet Phoebe is jout in her feather bed under her etting that turkey burn. Come and patchwork quilts, couldn't sleep for

sit in the kitchen, mother, and boss banniness the best tablecloth; I've hunted ev- old kitchen clock slowly chimed 12.

things. And do tell me where to find At length the eyelids drooped. The

It was the close of Christmas day.

Mistletoe and Its Magic Lured A. E. F. Boys

kitchen; made them "light a fire and self said incantations" (probably she said prayers!)-all considered out-

things away!" exclaimed the bourse man to the worried parents.

They did so. Then, when none looked, the bourse man sneaked out, unted carefully and found the "luch

The priest, down there, has periodic rouble with the peasant young folk of his parish-who "put pagan prac

When done as should be, boys and

"There's no fun in apple-tree mis-letoe!" Such is the queer judgment ness, for shipment to London at holi-

these trips for the girls' sake. All the same, they went out! Wandering (will the girls) in the mysterious old forests where white-whiskered Druids wandered, muttering, eyes uplifted, seeking, our home boys, mod-

The lad who sees the first bough of oak mistletoe must climb and cut it. Rightly, it is hacked with a sharp sorcerers, demons, pink mice, and

neath it, they are kissed, in some thing of a scramble, with much trick-ery—the well known "malice and in-

Their parents never told them. (But

That night Abby Renshaw, stretched

rageous.

But the wise woman was honest Each kid brought home a little "luck bag" of those ashes, "Make the children throw those

bags," which he put into his pocket. Since then he has made eight mil-

into the innocent holiday cult of mistletoe.

her son. "I feel rich."

"You are rich, mother."

She glanced out of the window.
"Why, we're 'most, out to the old place. Good lead! Ye have the old of the window."

"There's done as should be, boys and girls go out in merry bands, into the old oak forest, seeking mistletoe where rare boughs of it are discovered with difficulty.

day time. Slooploads of it go out, it particular, from the port of St. Malo OF course, our American Expeditionary Force boys went out on

ern, free-minded, got the magic plant

fint-now, there's a queer thing! He is carried back in triumph and be comes "king" for the afternoon. The bough is hung above the en-trance door. As the girls pass be-

justice of girls" aiding. Whence, the The same sitting room, with the saying:

"Jean can catch her, with his feet

Here creep the forbidden pagar recollections How can young folk recollect 3,000

Their parents never told them. (But their parents knew it, the same way, when they were kids). The early fathers, some 1,500 years ago, supposed that they had switched off the pagan part on to an innocent feast of hot chestnuts—popping, fragrant, on the ancient buckwheat cake griddle, it made Caesar thred.

It made Caesar thred. the ancient buckwheat cake griddle, It made Caesar tired.
gradation from burnt mistletoe in "You've got it wrong," he said, with antique days; but the young folk weariness, "the thing's not ivy." knew nothing of such detail ever!

Aunts and mothers hold their hands up, horrified and frightened. Fathers, uncles, grin, uneasy, and keep their eyes open. "Incantations" burn a stinking mess of leaves, ber- keep their eyes open. "Incantations" ries and broken branches, and "her- being forgotten, the young folk (here is another queer thing!) go through a wordless ceremony while the stuff

burns, sort of low, triumphant mur-mur, arms up-flung high in the air, while prancing, two-by-two, in curv-

ing lines, before the heathen cookery. And there you are.

THEY keep the bags. The parish priest can't get them from the mothers, sisters, aunts or servants. They are contraband, passed underhand, like a sneaking "button.

button, who has the buotton?" The bags are good to bury in a field, to make it fruitful. Good wives (here, put a pin), keep a luck bag

against their husband's jags.

A pinch of ash mixed with his drink, on bad days, prevents his going "over the top" entirely; or makes him drink less, or get less stewed, or drink slower and see pink mice will not good women do? They even keep tradition straight, on the dead quiet, among themselves!

Here is the last, queerest detail-an ntique belief so mixed up in the last 2,000 years that it has come to contradict itself! The mistletoe, originally, when properly burnt, conferred the power

to see ghosts-in those days when nen desired to see them, and ask them for tips upon the races. Hundreds of generations tried to pass the word along. Ghosts! Something about ghosts! So, still, the mistletoe bough hangs outside of Breton tavern. What for? Why, to guarantee the drinkers that they will not see things on their way home,

babes that come whizzing through the air to clutch you by your black hair! When Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon and copped out his good job in Rome, he told them of the Gaulish Druids and their magic mistletoe. Among his friends was Publius Syrus.

capable young writer who desired a sinecure. Now, Publius was good at maxims. from the state treasury, was offered for the best maxim. Publius did this:
"You need not hang up the lvy

branch above the wine that will

"I know." answered Publius, "but

New Mexico's Special Christmas Observance

MAGINE the barren hills of Galilee, clear and cold on the winter's night, while "shepherds
watch their flocks." Then recall
to its fealty. the well known legend of Mexico, of the appearance of the Virgin to a ing these days that terminate in La Mexican Indian lad in the hills out-side of the gates of the City of Mexico, exhorting the young shepherd to solemn high mass is said, is arrestgo to the bishop of the city and tell fig to the traveler among these him that he was to build a church adobe settlements. Clean-cut against

Throughout the Spanish villages of paper sack which has been partially Throughout the Spanish villages of paper sack which has been partially this section of the southwestern part filled with sand. These lights gleam of the United States the "feast" of watchful household god during the our Lady of Guadalupe, on December night until the candle finally fickers 12, commemorating this ancient mir- down in the sand and goes out. acle and opening the religious celebration of the Christmas season, has been observed for generations and of the Spanish people lasts.

While it is distinctly religious in

nature, it has the festival elements of a Spanish saint's day. Most note-

worthy of all is the pastoral play,

"La Apariencia de Muestra Senora de Guadalupe," enacted in a great number of villages by the people of that village. At twilight on the evening of De-cember 12, against the wide horizon line up and down the valleys and in the mountains, one may see a number of sudden fires starting up. These bonfires, fed by dry weeds and bits of wood gathered by the hand of the little settlement were filled with mother, father and children, are men and women, boys and girls, lighted not many yards from the house. The "luminaria" to Our Lady bables in buggies, all in their gayes? of Guadalupe is the devotion of that color and proudest raiment, on their household for that special day, and every day at that hour until Christ-adobe church. nas Eve its flame shoots up against

the darkening sky. The air is clear, cold and dry, and the silent places of this stupendous country hold with impressive dis-tinctness the crackle of the flames

Down on the "mesa," or flat table-land, perhaps one home, isolated from other human habitations, as play was serious and intent.

upon the spot where she stood, and you have the setting and story for a Christmas observance of the pastoral small, square-cornered roofs will be Spanish people of New Mexico in the adorned on each square corner with a light, made by placing a taper in a

A remnant of the old miracle play which was the origin of the Spanish drama remains in these communigenerations, and probably will con-tinue on as long as the religious zeal of the Spanish people lasts. adaptations, devised by the people, handed down by generations and generations of custom, with the limitations of an isolated, simple people.
But the spirit of the actors and the interest of the onlookers need no apology. They are an expression of the religious fervor that marks the

Spanish people.

For example, in one community— Los Griegos-Nuestra Senora Guadalupe was the patron saint of the town and December 12 the vilbables in buggies, all in their gayest

Preparations for days and assicipation for weeks led them first to their obligation to their patron, thus dancing, plays and feasting waited on prayer.

Shortly after noon a knot of people and carry far the voice of a parent to his child as he admonishes him or gives him some direction in Spanish.

In some mountain yillages these beacons dot with points of fire some signag road that follows a cluster of adobe houses over the shoulder of the hill, and the pungent smell of burning pine or cedar penetrates the air. nd carry far the voice of a parent began to gather around a small

